

# MARKETING COMMUNICATION STRATEGY FOR COMMUNITY LIBRARY IN INDONESIA

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## Abstract

Marketing is a process that can help managers of libraries and information centers achieve their objectives of providing the right information to the right client at the right time, the right place, and the right way; and increasing the satisfaction of their client. Marketing calls more than just developing good products, pricing them attractively, and making them available to target clients. Libraries and information centers must also communicate with existing and potential clients to make them aware of the improved and competitive products offered, and also to build and maintain good customer relationship. However, to communicate effectively the marketing communicator must understand the client's field of experience. Community libraries in Indonesia recognize that they can not appeal to all clients in the same way. They are too varied in characteristics that affect their needs. Identifying the target clients, developing an effective message, and selecting the message channel are the marketing communication strategies which should be applied to reach the target clients.

## INTRODUCTION

In the last decade, significant changes have taken place all over the world, and they have been posing challenges to various professions and professionals including librarians. As a consequence of the radical changes, information revolution, globalization etc, the client interested in information services has been on the increase. Moreover, the development of information and communication technology allows not only a huge possibility for networking among information centers, but also for making information available to a larger client than the existing one. As a result, librarians are facing some challenges; (1) increase in number of clients, their variety, their demands, and their expectations, (2) complexity in ways of identifying clients and their requirements, and servicing them, (3) increase in the capital cost of information and ICT (information and communication technology) to serve the increasing potential clients. Therefore, librarians are called to show their initiative and

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entrepreneurship. Preparing information services only when asked for, has to give in to a more systematic anticipation and research of the future requirements of different clients. By looking at these, marketing should be implemented in the libraries' day to day operations. Marketing plan helps how to provide a service which is in tune with what clients want, and adds perceived value to the organization.

The community library provides information services to clients who have different characteristics which affect their needs, their demands, and the way they meet the needs. Understanding the clients enables librarians to provide specific services that meet the identified clients needs. In Indonesia, the community libraries today recognize that they can not appeal to all existing clients or at least not to all clients in the same way, because they are too numerous, too widely scattered and too varied in their needs. Moreover the libraries themselves vary widely in their abilities to serve different clients.

## **COMMUNITY LIBRARIES IN BANDUNG, WEST JAVA**

In my paper I focused on some community libraries in Bandung, West Java, because Bandung is a pioneer in developing community libraries which are managed as business organizations. Moreover, community libraries brought up a new community which is called literary community. Nowadays, there are more than 40 community libraries all over Bandung, which have their own characteristics. Each of these community libraries has their own segment which influence their collections, facilities, and types of services offered. For example:

### *1. Comics Corner*

This place offers a wide variety of comics and there are also novels, magazines, and other literatures. Beside these collections, the Comics Corner also provides a small café which offers snacks and soft drinks. The reading space is open, large and has a relaxing atmosphere. The target segments are primary school, high school, and undergraduate students. In the Comics Corner the price for services offered is affordable for the target clients.

### *2. Pot Luck Library and Coffee Bar*

This place offers a very comfortable reading room with dark brown furnitures, which has a relaxing and exclusive atmosphere. The Pot Luck Library provides local and foreign magazines, novels, and literatures. While reading, the clients can order cakes, pastries, and beverages from the coffee bar. Occasionally, special events are held in Pot Luck, such as live music, book discussions, etc. Pot Luck target segments are young executives, postgraduate students, etc. The price for services offered is more expensive than in Comics Corner.

### *3. Rumah Buku*

Rumah Buku is located in a very nice and strategic place. It has a comfortable and large space not only for reading but also for discussion, presentation, and exhibition. Regularly, Rumah Buku has special events to accommodate clients' needs, such as discussions with experts on certain topic. It has a wide variety of collections, such as books (fiction/literature, culture/sociology, history, architecture, art, design, philosophy), music CDs (jazz, pop/rock, alternatives, classic), films. It also has a café which offers food and beverages.

### *4. Tobucil Library and Book Shop*

Tobucil Library has a wide variety of books, and has a nice and quiet environment. It has regular programs such as, origami club, knitting club, yoga club, online reading club, English club, jazz music club, classic music club, and writing club. Tobucil Library also offers monthly programs. For example, in February, it offers "Animal liberation campaign", "Story telling", "Talk show about Negotiation in Business", etc. Moreover, Tobucil has a program called "Jazz n Book", which is broadcasted once a week in Rase radio.

## **MARKETING COMMUNICATION STRATEGY**

Modern marketing calls for more than just developing good products, pricing them attractively, and making them available to target clients. Companies must also communicate with current and prospective clients, and what they communicate should be well arranged. Communication is concerned with sending and receiving knowledge, ideas, facts, figures, goals, emotions and values. Communication is also a central element of the way people relate to and cooperate with each other. Communication is more than a marketing tool. Companies not only send and receive information in order to cooperate, but parallel with this is that companies are constantly communicating their self images to all around them. In business organizations, communication with clients, shareholders, and employees is now regarded as a major resource, requiring careful management and adequate investment. Some communication is internal, involving the flow of information within organization, both to provide information for decision making and to maintain focus among the staff on what the organization is seeking to achieve. Without effective internal communication, the activities of a business will become uncoordinated and focused more on individual goals rather than on operational objectives. A lot of business communication is external. Without effective external communication between a business and its clients, the benefits needed and wanted by the market will not be understood, leading to loss of market share, and loss of profitability. Marketing communication strategy helps to create clearer, sharper messages appropriately directed to target clients. There are three factors of marketing communication strategies that have been tried by those four community libraries in Bandung :

### *1. Identifying the target clients*

Any marketing process starts with the perception of the client's needs, and further perceptions of possible ways in which that can be met. A marketing communicator must find

out who the clients are, the services they want and the benefits they are looking for. The communicator should start with a clear target client in mind. The community libraries in Bandung started with the recognition of the client's need of a nice and comfortable place for reading and discussion which can not be offered by conventional public libraries. There are clients who need and want to have a place where they can read while drinking, talking with friends, and listening to music. They do not always expect a quiet and formal reading room as in the conventional public libraries. The community libraries realize that reading culture has changed. They no longer follow the old fashioned regulation, "no food, no drink, no talking, no music in the library". They want a different environment in getting the information they need. They look not only for information but also convenience of getting it.. However, clients always require for an easy, comfortable, and convenient way to get what they want. The community libraries also recognize the client's needs of a place where they can meet people with the same interest or people from different background skills.

## *2. Developing an Effective Message*

Once the target client has been defined, the marketing communicator must decide what response is sought. The marketing communicator needs to know where the target client now stands and to what stage it needs to be moved. These stages include *awareness, knowledge, liking, preference, conviction, and purchase*. The target client may be totally unaware of the product, know only its name or a few things about it. Having defined the desired responses, the communicator then develops an effective message. Ideally, they should *get Attention, hold Interest, arouse Desire, and obtain Action*. There are two factors in developing an effective message: (a) message content -what to say, (b) message structure and format – how to say it. Furthermore, the communicator has to figure out a theme that will produce the desired responses: rational, emotional, and moral.

The community libraries in Bandung use positive emotional appeals such as love, pride, joy and humor to capture the attention of the clients. They send messages to the clients in order to help them solve their problem in finding a nice, comfortable, and convenient place to read, and do several activities on a reasonable price.

## *3. Selecting Message Channel*

There are two types of communication channels: (a) personal communication channels, (b) non personal communication channels.

In personal communication channels, two or more people communicate directly with each other. They might communicate face to face, over the telephone, through the mail, or even through the internet "chat". Non personal message channels are media that carry messages without personal contact. They include major media (newspapers, magazines, direct mail, radio, television, bill boards, signs, posters, online services, web sites), atmosphere (designed environments that create the client's leanings toward buying product), events are staged occurrences that communicate messages to target clients.

The community libraries in Bandung use both personal and non personal

communication channels. In giving information services, their staff communicate with their clients face to face. They realize that the impact of the messages on the target client is also affected by how the client views the communicator. Messages delivered by highly credible sources are more persuasive. The staff wear uniforms which are exclusively designed to suit the target client. For instance, the Comics Corner staff wear jeans and red T shirts with the illustration of the company sign, because its target clients are students. The staff of Pot Luck Library wear more formal uniform. They also use telephone and internet to communicate with their clients such as booking a place for having an event, ordering books, asking for information about libraries' programs, etc. They deliver their messages through the radio and local newspapers to inform the collections, facilities and the program that they have, and also the reasons for the clients to come, etc. They also design media prints, such as booklets, leaflets and posters. They offer nice and comfortable atmosphere to satisfy their clients. Some special events are regularly held in order to accommodate the clients' needs, such as discussions with experts on a specific topic, live music, and movies, etc.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

In preparing marketing communications, the community libraries in Bandung (1) identify the target client and its characteristics, (2) construct messages with an effective content and structure, and (3) select the right communication channel both personal and non personal. The key factors implemented are:

1. realizing that service to the client is a key
2. comfortable and convenience design
3. customization
4. empowering the staff

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